

Theology vol 14
TRADITION

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NO RULE

NOW TO

CHRISTIANS,

EITHER OF

FAITH OR PRACTICE.

Being an ANSWER to

Dr. BRETT's *Treatise of Tradition.*

By S. W. A. B. *h*

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TRADITION

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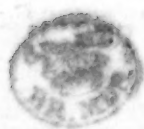
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Moderation will always be a Virtue, and it will always be useful, for the governing of our Passions, when engag'd in any Controversy ; and for the regulating of our Notions in many difficult Points in Divinity ; and it's very often the best Rule, even in matters of the utmost importance, to observe the Golden Mean. And it cannot but be commendable in all the genuine Sons of the Church of *England*, to follow

her laudable Example ; and it is manifest, that she does determine with great Temper and Prudence in the very Articles of our Religion.

Thus with respect to the Blessed Sacrament, she maintains, (according to the sacred Oracles) that the consecrated Elements are the Body and Blood of *Christ* ; but carefully and piously avoids the Absurdities of the *Latin*, and the Extravagancy of the *Greek* Church : For she neither asserts a Transubstantiation with the *Roman* Church, which is contrary to the Sense and Reason of all Mankind ; nor affirms, that the Bread and Wine are made the Body and Blood of *Christ*, by the Descent of the Holy Ghost upon them, which is impossible to be known without a Divine Revelation. She leaves a Sacrament a Mystery, as we ought to do ; and I am verily persuaded, that whoever attempts to explain this Mystery, or that of the Trinity, will plunge themselves into most fatal Errors.

In the case under consideration, she recommends the divinely inspir'd Scriptures, as an infallible Rule, to direct us safely to everlasting Happiness ; but she neither denies Tradition to be an excellent means of understanding the sacred Oracles, nor yet makes it a Rule of Faith or Practice : and it had been an happy thing, if the Essentialists had used the same Moderation.

In several cases in Morality, we cannot positively determine the fix'd Bounds of Virtue and Vice, nor readily descry where our harmless Liberty ends, and a sinful Excess does begin. Since then there is so easy a Transition from Virtue

to Vice, if we allow our selves to approach the Borders of Sin as near as we conceive that we may innocently do it, it will be no great wonder, if we insensibly pass over the Limits of our Duty, and immediately fall into the Snares of the Wicked one, and precipitate our selves into inevitable Ruin.

But in several Points in Divinity, both Extremes are dangerous and fatal ; and if we depart from the Example of our Church, and transgress the Bounds and Limits of Truth and Orthodoxy on either side, we fall into fatal Mistakes, and may find our selves soon involved in Schism or Heresy, or both.

Dr. *Brett* says^a, that the Church of *England* is defective, and I am of opinion, that he has run into the contrary Extreme.

He affirms^b, that she has great Defects in matters of the highest consequence, if we examine them by her own Rule ; and I declare, that he, pretending to supply those Defects, has fallen into greater Errors, if we try them by that very Rule. Which Rule, he says, is that only infallible Rule of true Religion^c ; and the Rule is this : “ That we hold and believe what is agree-
“ able to the Doctrine of the Old or New Testa-
“ ment, and what the Catholick Fathers and an-
“ tient Bishops have collected from that very
“ Doctrine.” Now by the bye, this Rule was only given to the Clergy by the Convocation in the Year 1571^d. and these holy Bishops, and

^a Pag. 1.

^b P. 6.

^c P. 10, 11.

^d P. 1.

primitive Fathers, whose Testimonies he refers us to, are those who flourish'd before, or liv'd about the Time of the Council of *Nice*^e.

Now this Word *about* must include about 25 Years after that Council^f, that he might press into his Service the Testimony of St. *Cyril* Bishop of *Jerusalem*.

This Learned Gentleman gives his Reasons why he fix'd upon this Period^g, "not only because all the Learned allow it to have been the purest and most uncorrupt Age of the Church; but also because the *Charismata*, or miraculous Gifts and Graces of the Holy Spirit, were so long undoubtedly continued in the Church." And these may be his true Reasons; but I'll venture to mention another prudential Reason, why he should extend his Enquiries so far beyond the Council of *Nice*, as to take in St. *Cyril*: For otherwise, he could not have produc'd any one expresse Testimony, from any one authentick Author, for his Prayer of Invocation. Now in the Directions receiv'd by the Bishops in the Year 1582, they were advised to be determined by the Authority of the Fathers that flourish'd in the first six Centuries after *Christ*, or thereabouts, and no longer, because then the Papacy began^h.

For the like Reason, I think, that we should not in this Dispute admit of the Testimony of the *Greek* Fathers that flourish'd after the Coun-

^e P. 41 42.
^g P.

^f Vid. his Dissertation on the Liturgies, p. 3.
^h P. 4.

cil of *Nice*, because in that fourth Century Corruptions began to creep into the Eastern Churches,

This Learned Divine saysⁱ, that all Protestants pretend to adhere to the former part of the beforemention'd Rule, but take it in very different Senses.

A. But the Rule is sure and infallible, the Interpreters only fallible.

He there asks, What then shall an honest well-meaning Man do in this case?

A. The Doctor seems to forget, how the aforesaid Rule was given to the Clergy, and not to every well-meaning Christian; and I hope he will not deprive the People of their Bibles.

He adds, it is said by some, " Let every Man search the Scriptures for himself with an honest sincere Mind, and God will enable him to understand them rightly, so far as it is necessary to Salvation.

A. If the Learned Clergy had not led them into Schism and Heresy, this Rule would have been sufficient for the common People, if they had also taken care to lead a good Life, according to our Saviour's Direction, *St. John* vii. 17. and applied themselves to their proper Ministers, upon proper Occasions.

But he farther observes^k, that the Rule which some give to the well-meaning Christians, is a false one, and appears to be so in fact, " which is the most evident Demonstration," and his Reason is, because every one shall give a diffe-

ⁱ P. 11.

^k P. 12, 13.

rent Sense of the same Text, tho' they all follow the same Rule.

A. I have taken your Directions, and admit of the latter Part of your own Rule, as well as the former, and have carefully consider'd the Testimonies of those Fathers which you recommend, that I might attain to a right Understanding of those Texts which are alledged to justify your Prayer of Invocation. Now you affirm, that it ought to be receiv'd; but I who follow the same Rule as you do, say that it ought not to be made Part of the Communion Service. Our Opinions are widely different, therefore in your own way of Reasoning your own Rule is false and deceitful, and appears to be so in fact, which is the most evident Demonstration. But the truth is, the Sacred Scripture is an infallible Rule, and the Direction given for a right understanding of it may be very proper; yet the Wicked One, the wicked World, or Man's own wicked Heart, may cast such a Mist before a Man's Eyes, or such a Cloud over his Mind, that he cannot perceive that, which another can plainly understand under the very same Directions; tho' we are not able to give any certain account of the matter, or assign the particular Reason. The Doctor declares¹, that the constant universal Tradition of the Church, "is that sufficient Means by which
" we may come to the Knowledge of things
" necessary to Salvation; and that this Tradition is the only Method we now have, where-

¹ P. 30.

“ by we may come to the understanding of the
 “ Scriptures; and particularly the things there-
 “ in contain’d which are necessary to Salvation.”

A Tradition is an excellent means of attaining to the true sense of Scripture: But I can mention one method by which we may arrive at a good knowledge of Scripture, and that is, the comparing of one Text of Scripture with another. And by this means interpret I *ἑλωγήσας* by *ἑχαρμήσας*, which is quite contrary to your way of interpreting it by Tradition; which with me argues, that Tradition is not the only method, nor always the surest way of interpreting the Holy Oracles.

But he adds^m, “ Even the Scripture itself
 “ sends us to Tradition, *Deut. xxxii. 7. Jer. vi.*
 “ *16. Isaiah viii. 2.*” St. Paul saysⁿ, *Now I*
praise you, Brethren, that ye remember me in
all things, and keep the Ordinances (or Tra-
ditions) as I delivered them to you. And a-
gain^o, Therefore, Brethren, stand fast, and
hold the Traditions which ye have been taught,
whether by Word or our Epistle. And soon after
he says^p, Now we command you, Brethren, in
the Name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye
withdraw yourselves from every Brother that
walketh disorderly, and not after the Tradition
which he receiv’d of us. “ Here (adds he)
 “ we see plain mention of Traditions deliver’d
 “ by word of Mouth, as well as by Epistles;

^m P. 32, 33.
^p 2 Thes. iii. 6.

ⁿ 1 Cor. xi. 2.

^o 2 Thes. ii. 15.

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A. I have taken your Directions, and admit of the latter Part of your own Rule, as well as the former, and have carefully consider'd the Testimonies of those Fathers which you recommend, that I might attain to a right Understanding of those Texts which are alledged to justify your Prayer of Invocation. Now you affirm, that it ought to be receiv'd; but I who follow the same Rule as you do, say that it ought not to be made Part of the Communion Service. Our Opinions are widely different, therefore in your own way of Reasoning your own Rule is false and deceitful, and appears to be so in fact, which is the most evident Demonstration. But the truth is, the Sacred Scripture is an infallible Rule, and the Direction given for a right understanding of it may be very proper; yet the Wicked One, the wicked World, or Man's own wicked Heart, may cast such a Mist before a Man's Eyes, or such a Cloud over his Mind, that he cannot perceive that, which another can plainly understand under the very same Directions; tho' we are not able to give any certain account of the matter, or assign the particular Reason. The Doctor declares, that the constant universal Tradition of the Church, " is that sufficient Means by which
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^m P. 32, 33.
^p 2 Thes. iii. 6.

ⁿ 1 Cor. xi. 2.

^o 2 Thes. ii. 15.

“ and the Scriptures themselves, both of the
 “ Old and New Testament, are so far from
 “ condemning true and primitive Tradition,
 “ that they plainly recommend it to us, as the
 “ best and surest Rule by which we ought to be
 “ directed in our Christian Practice.” And Dr.
Brett farther argues⁹, “ that it is evident from
 “ the Scriptures themselves, that the whole of
 “ Christianity was at first deliver’d by Oral
 “ Tradition, and commanded to be observ’d;
 “ therefore, where we have a certain indubit-
 “ able Evidence of Apostolical Tradition, we
 “ are no less oblig’d to observe and keep it,
 “ than if we found it clearly revealed to us
 “ in the Holy Scriptures. Again, for as much
 “ as the Scriptures of the New Testament do
 “ testify that the Christian Religion was at first
 “ deliver’d by Tradition, and that we are as
 “ much oblig’d to observe what we find to have
 “ been so deliver’d, as what we find to have
 “ been written by the Apostles; and these
 “ Scriptures do no where teach, that all things
 “ taught by our Saviour or his Apostles, as ne-
 “ cessary to Salvation, are there collected and
 “ there recorded, it evidently follows, that
 “ where we have certain and undoubted Testi-
 “ mony of any thing’s being deliver’d by the
 “ Apostles as necessary to be practis’d, we are
 “ as much obliged to practise accordingly, as
 “ if we were requir’d to do so by any Text of
 “ Scripture. And whatever has *Antiquity*, U-

⁹ P. 78, 79, 81.

(II)

“ *universality*, and *Consent*, has such certain
“ and undoubted Testimony.

A. If the Doctor had all along join'd Scripture and Tradition, I had never written an Answer to this Treatise; but here he manifestly makes Tradition distinct from Scripture, the
“ best and surest Rule by which we ought to
“ be directed in our Christian Practice.

And here he plainly departs from his own Rule before laid down, and evidently contradicts himself, where he positively and expressly consents to what I contend for, namely, “ That
“ it is necessary, for the right understanding of
“ our Duty as Christians, that we join together
“ Scripture and Tradition.”

It is certain that *St. Paul* recommended Tradition; herein we are agreed.

But the Question now is, not whether *St. Paul* recommended Tradition before all the Books of the New Testament were written, as certainly they were not when *St. Paul* gave those Directions, but whether, now the Canon of the New Testament is compleated, there be any thing, which our blessed Saviour and his holy Apostles taught as necessary to be believed and practised, in order to Salvation, transmitted down to us by Tradition only.

When the Essentialists have prov'd this, and given us a Detail of all such necessary Points of Faith and Practice, they will have gain'd this Point, but as yet they have not done it.

This excellent Writer owns^f, " That meer
 " Oral Tradition, deliver'd from Father to Son,
 " corroborated by no written Evidence, is by
 " no means to be relied upon for any long
 " Succession." I add; nor any written Tra-
 dition that has not a good Foundation in the
 Word of God.

This great Divine also declares^t, " That
 " where a Tradition is contrary to a divine
 " Command, such a Tradition is not to be fol-
 " low'd." If there may be such a Tradition,
 then I think it no certain nor infallible Rule.

A Tradition that contradicts the Word of
 God, undoubtedly is to be rejected. The Opi-
 nions of the blessed Martyrs are often to be
 corrected by the inspired Scriptures; but the
 Doctrine of the Holy Bible is never to be re-
 formed by the ancient Fathers.

Dr. Brett says^u, " That where we have a
 " certain and undoubted Testimony of any
 " thing's being delivered by the Apostles, as
 " necessary to be practised, we are as much
 " obliged to practise accordingly, as if we
 " were to do so by any Text of Scripture."

A. True; but then I am of Opinion that
 there is no such thing so deliver'd down to us
 by Tradition only.

Before the Scriptures of the New Testament
 were written, Tradition was the Christian's
 Rule. When St. Paul had written his Epistles
 to the *Thessalonians* and *Corinthians*, and part

^f P. 36.^t P. 34.^u P. 81.

only of the New Testament was written, then Tradition and Scripture were the Christians Rule; but when all the Books of the New Testament were written, then, I believe, the Scriptures remained the Christians only sure and infallible Rule for all things to be believed and practised as necessary to Salvation.

But says he^w, " The Scriptures do no where teach that all things taught by our Saviour, or his Apostles, as necessary to Salvation, are there collected and recorded."

A. But I believe that they were written by inspiration, that they might be to us a sure and infallible Rule in all Points necessary to Salvation.

Here then we disagree.

The Question is, who must be the Judge betwixt us?

And I appeal to Tradition, and will stand by the determination of the antient Fathers; and I presume that the Essentialists cannot refuse to do so too.

Now a learned and judicious Author has prov'd this Point for me, from Tradition^z. I shall select only eight of his Testimonies.

" St. *Irenæus* speaking of the Gospel, teaches, that the Apostles deliver'd it to us in the Scriptures, to be the Foundation and Pillar of our Faith. And he complains, that when the Hereticks he writ against were confuted out of Scripture, they set themselves to accuse Scrip-

^w P. 81.

^z No sufficient Reasons, p. 6. &c.

" tures,

" tures, as if we had them not right, or as if
 " they wanted Authority, or as differently ex-
 " pressed, and because Truth cannot be found
 " out by their help, except by such as are
 " acquainted with Tradition. *Tertullian* a-
 " dore the fulness of Scriptures. *St. Clemens*
 " *Alexandrinus*, says, we use the Scriptures as
 " the Criterion to find out things.—We do
 " not wait for the Testimony of Men, but
 " prove that which is sought after by the Voice
 " of the Lord, which is more satisfactory than
 " all Demonstration; or rather, is the only
 " Demonstration. Says *St. Cyprian*, if it be
 " commanded in the Gospel, or be contained
 " in the Epistles or Acts of the Apostles,—
 " let this divine and holy Tradition be observ'd.
 " *St. Athanasius* tells *Marcellinus*, that the
 " holy and divinely inspired Scriptures,—are
 " the Wells of Salvation, in these only is the
 " Doctrine of Godliness declar'd. *St. Basil* de-
 " clares, that all scripture is divinely inspired
 " and profitable, being written by the Spirit on
 " purpose, that here, as in a common Hospital
 " for Souls, every one may collect a Medicine
 " for his own Passions, &c. and all that is be-
 " sides the divinely inspired Scriptures, being
 " not of Faith, is Sin." *St. Gregory Nyssen*
 styles the Holy Scriptures, the Rule and Law of
 all Doctrine. Says *Theod.* " Our Business is
 " not to seek after the things that have been
 " kept in silence, but to stick to those that are
 " written."

And now, methinks, according to these plain
 and

and full Evidences, the Scriptures contain all things necessary to Salvation ; and that nothing is transmitted down to us by Tradition only, that is necessary to be believed or practised in order to Salvation ; which is what I was to prove by Tradition.

But the Author of this Treatise of Tradition says^y, “ That we have nothing but Tradition “ to teach us that the first Day of the Week “ ought to be kept holy.”

A. When the Jewish seventh Day *Sabbath* was abolish'd^z, we have no good reason to believe but that some one Day in the Week would be appointed to be kept holy to the Lord in the room of it: And the New Testament does afford sufficient Arguments to convince us that this was the first Day of the Week.

The great *Jehovah* created the World in six Days, and rested the seventh Day and sanctified it^a; and the blessed *Jesus* having made himself a Sacrifice for the Redemption of all Mankind, rose from the Dead on the first Day of the Week^b; and as he declared himself Lord of the *Sabbath*^c, so we think that the Festival was translated from the seventh Day of the Week, to that upon which our Saviour rose again from the Dead; and that this is fairly intimated in the New Testament. For it was on the first Day of the Week, the Day of our Saviour's Resurrection, that the Apostles received those miracu-

^y P. 20. ^z Col. ii. 16, 17. ^a Gen. ii. 2. ^b Mark xvi. 15, 16. ^c Ibid. ii. 28.

ious Gifts of the Holy Ghost, whereby they were enabled to publish the Gospel to all the World; and that too in Languages given them by Inspiration^d; and it was upon the first Day of the Week, that the Disciples (as Christians) came together to break Bread, *i. e.* to celebrate the Holy Eucharist^e; and St. *Paul* order'd the *Corinthians* to lay by something for Alms upon the first Day of the Week^f; and St. *John* tells us, that he was in the Spirit on the Lord's Day^g. Now to use Dr. *Brett's* own Words^h, " If a
 " Man take these Hints and Intimations which
 " he finds in the Scripture, and expounds them
 " by the Tradition of the Church, then he
 " will be convinced that there was an Aposto-
 " lical Direction given to all Christians to ob-
 " serve and keep holy the first Day of the
 " Week; and that it was the first Day of the
 " Week and no other that was call'd the Lord's
 " Day."

This Duty then is not to be learned from Tradition only, but Scripture expounded by Tradition, which is allowed to be a very proper means by which we come to the right knowledge thereof.

This Author saysⁱ, " That it is by Tradition
 " that we must know what is Scripture, and
 " what is not so, that it is the Rule to know
 " what Books make up the Canon of the New
 " Testament, that is, by the Tradition and Au-

^d Acts ii. 1, &c. ^e Acts xx. 7. ^f 1 Cor. xvi. 2. ^g Rev. i. 10. ^h P. 23, 24. ⁱ P. 32, 136, 139.

“ authority of the Church, and no other, that
 “ we receive the Books of the New Testament
 “ as the inspired Rule of the Christian Faith and
 “ Worship: For there is no part of the New
 “ Testament which teaches us what Books were
 “ written by inspiration, and what were not so;
 “ ———or that these Books are to be the Rule
 “ of our Faith and Practice.

A. I answer first, that though we have nothing but Tradition for the Canon of the New Testament, we are content, and thankful to God for his good Providence; but we have more than Tradition for the Rule of our Faith and Practice, and that is the unerring Word of God.

Secondly, I would gladly have an Instance given of any one necessary Duty, taught by the Apostles, and delivered to us by Tradition only; but this can be no Instance or Proof thereof; for this cannot be one of those Traditions recommended by *St. Paul*, for many Books of the New Testament were written after *St. Paul* had recommended Tradition; and the Books thereof were not collected by the Apostles, nor was the Canon of the New Testament compleated till after the Death of the Apostles^k.

Thirdly, Though we believe that the Books of the New Testament were written by the Apostles and Evangelists, upon the Authority of the Church, yet we do not believe the Gos-

^k P. 78, 79, 80.

pel to be the Word of God, upon the Testimonies of the ancient Fathers, but upon farther Examination, and for several other satisfactory reasons.

He adds¹, “ No Man can tell what Books “ are divinely inspired, and what are apocryphal, “ but by Tradition.”

A. But, thanks be to God, we have more than fallible Tradition for to guide us in the way to everlasting Felicity, even his own infallible written Word.

This ingenious Divine argues^m, “ That God “ has appointed Tradition as the best and safest “ Guide to direct how to understand the Scrip- “ tures, even in matters necessary to Salvation “ of all.”

A. The Scriptures sometimes command Traditions to be observed, but never, I believe, recommend it as our best and surest Guide to direct us how to understand the same. And our Saviour teaches us to have a care that we do not transgress the Commandment of God by our Traditionⁿ. Dr. *Brett* says, our Saviour did not blame the *Pharisees* for having a regard to Tradition, “ but for setting up an Opinion or “ Decree of their Fathers, against the express “ Law of God^o.” And, I think, that the Essentialists lie under the Censure of our Saviour, by making the Commandment of God of none effect by their Tradition; for the Lord *Jesus* consecrated the eucharistical Bread and

¹P. 31, 138.

^mP. 32.

ⁿSt. Matth. xv. 2, 3, 6.

^oP. 34

Wine into his Body and Blood, by a thanksgiving Prayer and his divine Word, and commanded us to do as he did^p; but they teach and direct, that the Bread and Wine in the Lord's Supper, should be consecrated by their Prayer of Invocation, which is directly contrary to what the blessed *Jesus* commands. And I think, that the Texts of Scripture produced^q to prove that our God has appointed Tradition as the best and safest Guide to direct us how to understand the sacred Oracles, do not come up fully to the Point. The first Text is^r, *Remember the Days of old, consider the Years of many Generations, ask thy Father, and he will shew thee; thy Elders, and they will tell thee*; that is, look back as far as you are able, consult the most ancient Records, and advise with the most aged Persons, and you may be inform'd how the Almighty chose your Forefathers, and has dealt with you, ever since you were brought out of the Land of *Ægypt*.

The next Text is^r, *Thus saith the Lord, stand ye in the Ways, and see, and ask for the old Paths, where is the good Way, and walk therein, and ye shall find rest for your Souls*, i. e. follow the Example of the ancient Patriarchs and holy Men of old, and not the Practices and Devices of those who have of late seduced you into Error. This Passage then, though more to the purpose than the former,

^p St. Luke xxii. 19.
^q Jer. vi. 16.

^q P. 32, 33.

^r Deut. xxxii. 7.

yet does not clearly make out the thing it was brought to prove.

The next Proof is much less to the purpose; says the Doctor, " So *Isaiah* calls the People " not only to the Law, but to the Testimony, " or Tradition of their Fathers also." Now by comparing together the 16th and 20th Verses of this Chapter, we may perceive that Law and Testimony here signify only the Oracles of God; and *Testimony* here is so far from signifying Traditions, that it rather signifies the Promises contain'd in the Word of God, as it plainly does *Psal.* xciii. 5.

The Texts quoted out of the New Testament mention Traditions, but say nothing of their being the best and surest Guide, for the Interpreters of the sacred Oracles". For my part, I think, that right Reason has a better Claim than Tradition, to the Privilege and Honour of being the best and surest Guide to direct us how to understand the Scriptures, and for being a Rule of Faith and Practice. For natural Religion was before reveal'd Religion, and Reason was a Rule of Faith and Practice before Tradition was; and right Reason is still, in some Cases, a Rule of Faith and Practice. It is by Reason that an Infidel must be brought to admit of Revelation; and it is by Principles of Reason, that we must prove the Being, Existence, and Majesty of God, which is the first Principle and Foundation; and in the Application of ge-

f Isa, viii. 20,

f 1 Cor. xi. 2,

2 Thes. ii. 15, and iii. 6.

neral Rules to particular Cases, we are still often left to the guidance of right Reason.

And Reason is as earnestly recommended in Scripture as Tradition.

As Man was created in the *Image of God*^w, so the *Spirit of Man* (says Solomon) is the *Candle of the LORD*, searching all the inward parts of the *Belly*^x. Says the ever-living God^y, *I call Heaven and Earth to record this Day against you, that I have set before you Life and Death, Blessing and Cursing, therefore chuse Life, that thou and thy Seed may live.* Here it is plain, the God of *Israel* treated with the *Jews* as free Agents, and required of them to make so good a use of their Reason, as to chuse that which should tend most to their own real Happiness. And the Almighty directly call'd upon his People to make use of their Reason, saying^z, *Remember this and shew yourselves Men*; and blamed them, because^a, *They were wise to do evil, but to do good they had no knowledge.* And says^b, *Happy is the Man that findeth Wisdom, and the Man that getteth Understanding. For the Merchandise of it is better than the Merchandise of Silver, and the Gain thereof than fine Gold. She is more precious than Rubies, and all the things thou can'st desire are not to be compared unto her. Length of Days is in her right Hand: and in her left Hand Riches and Honour.*

^w Gen. i. 26. ^x Prov. xx. 27. ^y Deut. xxx. 19. ^z Isaiah
xlvi. 8. ^a Jer. iv. 22. ^b Prov. iii. 13, 18.

Her Ways are Ways of Pleasantness, and all her Paths are Peace. She is a Tree of Life to them that lay hold upon her; and happy is every one that retaineth her. Again^c, Keep sound Wisdom and Discretion. So shall they be Life unto thy Soul, and Grace unto thy Neck. Then shalt thou walk in thy Way safely, and thy Foot shall not stumble. And when the Heathens acted so far below their Character, as reasonable Creatures, as to make and worship Idols, the Psalmist bitterly reproaches them, saying^d, They that make them are like unto them; so is every one that trusteth in them. And Isaiah the Prophet endeavouring to secure the People from Idolatry^e, appeals to the Reason of all Mankind, and elegantly and largely discovers the Folly and Absurdity of People's thinking that the Work of Men's Hands could have any Divinity in them; and then adds^f, A deceitful Heart hath turned him aside, that he cannot deliver his Soul, nor say, is there not a Lye in my right Hand; as much as to say, if vulgar Errors and a strong Prejudice, a vile Tradition and a polluted Heart, had not perverted his Understanding, his own Reason might have told, that that could not be a God which was made by mortal Men; wherefore it is said^g, Remember this, and shew yourselves Men. And the LORD of Hosts expostulating with his People, for offering polluted Bread upon his

^c Prov. iii. 21, 22, 23.
^f V. 20. ^g Isa. xlii. 8.

^d Psal. cxv. 8.

^e Isa. xlii. 10, 20.

Altar, gives them to understand how unreasonable and inconsiderate such their Proceedings were^h: *And if ye offer the blind for Sacrifice, is it not evil? and if ye offer the lame and sick is it not evil? offer it now unto thy Governor, will he be pleased with thee, or accept thy Person?* And our blessed Saviour said to the Jewsⁱ, *Tea, and why even of yourselves judge ye not what is right*: As if he had said, why do you not proceed according to the Principles of right Reason, which would have been a means to have induced you to have received both me and my Doctrine? And what St. Paul says^k, is directly to our purpose, and manifestly shews the vast use of right Reason in Religion; *That which may be known of God, is manifest in them: [i. e. the Sons of Men] for God hath shewed it unto them. For the invisible things of him, from the Creation of the World, are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal Power and Godhead.* And his Precept is^l, *Prove all things, hold fast that which is good.* And the same Apostle^m shews, that the more obvious Principles of Religion, belong to Children, but the more difficult Points belong unto Men, whose discerning Faculties have been improved by use.

And the Miracles which were wrought to prove the divine Authority of the sacred Scrip-

^h Mal. i. 8.ⁱ 1 Thes. v. 21.^j St. Luke xii. 57.^m Heb. v. 13, 14.^k Rom. i. 19, 20.

tures, were Appeals to the Sense and Reason of all Mankind. But altho' Reason is of more general use than Tradition, and more frequently made use of, and it is incumbent on us to improve so great a Blessing of Heaven, and altho', whilst we receive some things which are above our Reason, we are not to admit of any Doctrine that is repugnant to right Reason; yet we are not to trust too much to it in this our depraved State of Nature, for fear we should mistake false Reasonings for the Dictates of right Reason. Certainly Reason is not made of no effect by the Grace of God, but whilst it is subservient to Revelation, it is very serviceable to Religion. And if the *Ægyptians* had acted like Men, they had never adored such vile Creatures, nor worshipped such scandalous Deities as they did.

But if we extol it too highly, and rely upon it too much, it may precipitate us, with the Free-Thinkers, into most fatal Errors.

Says St. Paulⁿ, *Where is the Wise? where is the Scribe? where is the Disputer of this World? hath not God made foolish the Wisdom of this World?* i. e. hath not God discovered the Wisdom of the *Gentile* Philosophers, and *Jewish* Doctors, to be but Folly, in comparison of the dispensation of the Gospel. And in his Epistle to the *Colossians*^o, he advises us to take care that we be not seduced by Heathen Philosophy, tho' set off with the most specious Pre-

ⁿ 1 Cor. i. 20.

^o Ch. ii. 8.

tences; nor by the legal Observations, nor humane Traditions of the *Jews*. *Beware* (says he) lest any Man spoil you through Philosophy and vain Deceit, after the Tradition of Men, after the Rudiments of the World, and not after Christ.

Mr. Rapin ^P thinks, " That we cannot but
 " be easily convinced that humane Reason ne-
 " ver shone forth with so much natural Force
 " and Vigour, as in *Plato* and *Aristotle*; most
 " certain it is, that by the Power of their na-
 " tural Faculties, they had dived so far into the
 " most impenetrable Abyss of Nature, that
 " scarce any thing seems to have escaped their
 " view; a thousand Ages, and a thousand Lives,
 " will never produce any thing that can be com-
 " mensurate to the extent of their almost im-
 " mense Capacities." Now since these so much
 admir'd Philosophers, did greatly err in many
 things of vast importance, it should teach us not
 to rely too much upon our own Reason; for
 the weakness of that Reason which has ap-
 pear'd so sublime, in Persons of the greatest Parts,
 should teach us to distrust our own, and to be
 very thankful to God for the sacred Scriptures,
 that only infallible Rule both of Faith and
 Practice.

Just so we should make the best use we can
 of Tradition, which is of vast and frequent use
 in very many Points of Religion; but then we
 should be abundantly careful nor to rely upon

it too much, nor to mistake that for an Apostolical Tradition which is not so: for otherwise we may be led into fearful Mistakes; the Idolatry, and other manifold Corruptions of the Church of *Rome*, are a deplorable Instance thereof.

Our learned Adversary takes a Pleasure in recommending this Rule laid down by St. *Austin*⁹, “ Whatsoever the universal Church
 “ holdeth, and which was not instituted by
 “ any Council, but has been always observed,
 “ that we most rightly conclude to have been
 “ a Tradition, derived from Apostolical Authority.” And he justly admires that Rule of *Vincentius Lirinensis*^r, who assures us, that the way to secure us perfectly sound in the right Faith, is, by God’s Grace, upon these two Foundations. *First*, “ Upon the Authority of
 “ the Holy Scripture; and (because the sacred Oracles are expounded various ways) “ after
 “ that, upon the Tradition of the Catholick
 “ Church:” And who farther teaches, that
 “ it ought to be our first and principal Care to
 “ chuse such Doctrines as we find to have been
 “ believed *in all Places, at all Times, and by*
 “ *all the Faithful*. For there is nothing truly
 “ and properly Catholick (as the Word sufficiently declares) but what truly and fully
 “ comprehends all these. And we are thus
 “ Catholick, when we follow *Universality,*
 “ *Antiquity, and unanimous Consent.*

⁹ P. 40.

^r P. 42, 43, 44.

Now says Dr. Brett¹, " The Doctrines and Practices of the Church of *Rome*, which we justly charge her with as Corruptions, will by no means bear the Test in all these Points, *Antiquity*, *Universality*, and *Consent*: But wherever they will bear this Test in one Particular, they certainly fail in another. Thus, if any of them have *Antiquity*, they fail in *Universality* and *Consent*. — Or if they have *Universality*, — then they have fail'd in *Antiquity* and *Consent*. — But (says he) generally, I believe I may say universally, they all fail in the Point of *Antiquity*. And² — we can trace the Original of them, and find them to fall much short of the Apostolical Age, or the Time of the Council of *Nice*."

Here then (forasmuch as false Traditions have been impos'd upon Mankind in several Ages) I shall carefully try and examine whether the Traditions which the Essentialists would impose upon us, be truly primitive and Apostolical. And I think, that I can truly say the same things against most of the main Points in dispute, as has been said against most of the Corruptions of the Church of *Rome*, for they will by no means bear the Test of the aforesaid three Marks of Orthodoxy. And (according to the former part of the Doctor's own Rule) I will add one thing more, not here taken notice of, namely, that at least three of the four

¹ P. 66,

² P. 102.

Points have no manner of Ground or Foundation in the Word of God. And,

First, The Essentialists have made praying for the Dead, part of the Communion Service. Now there is not the least Intimation in any part of the sacred Scriptures, that such a Prayer for the Dead ought to be made any part of the Eucharistical Service. Here then this very ancient Custom fails in the most material Point.

St. *Justin Martyr* says, " After the Believer
" is baptized, and so incorporated and made
" one with us, we lead him to the Congrega-
" tion of the Brethren,—and then with great
" fervency pour out our Souls in common Pray-
" ers, both for ourselves, for the Person bap-
" tised, and for all others all the World over.—
And then Prayers being over, they proceeded to the Eucharistical Service, as that holy Martyr there declares. Wherefore no such Prayer as this was then part of their Communion Service, for that was only eucharistical; nay, it was excluded their publick Worship, for they pray'd only for those who were Inhabitants of this World.

This Custom then wants Antiquity, and ought not to be imposed upon us as an Apostolical Tradition.

It was used indeed in *Tertullian's* Days, and consequently a little after St. *Justin's* time; and so I have trac'd out the Original of this Practice.

The second thing which the Essentialists have introduc'd, is the oblatory Prayer.

But God has not required it, and they ought not to teach for Doctrines the Commandments of Men.

Dr. *Hicks* tells us, that a Sacrifice (as it signifies the whole Sacrificial Administration) "is
" a religious Action [or Operation] of a Priest,
" ordinary or extraordinary, by which a Gift
" brought is solemnly offered, according to the
" Rights and Observations of any Religion,
" in, before, at, or upon any Place, unto any
" God, to honour and worship him, and there-
" by acknowledge him to be God and Lord^w."

And he makes *Action* the *Summum Genus* of Sacrifice, because sacrificing must be Action. The subject of this Action is a Gift brought, and actually offered to God.

The Object therefore of this Worship is God.

The Efficient, who offers the Gift, is a Priest.

The End of offering it, is to honour, worship, and acknowledge him to be God and Lord to whom the Gift is offered.

But then he declares^x, " Indeed the bare Act of offering in itself, without speaking a Word, is an Act of religious Worship."

Now, according to this Description and Account of a Sacrifice, I think, that it appears, that not a vocal Prayer, but a real Action is the necessary Rite of Oblation.

^w Christian Priesthood, p. 159, 160, 161.

^x P. 164.

The learned Author of *The Necessity, &c.* arguing for the oblatory Prayer, says, "The Agreement of the whole World before our Saviour's Time, and the universal Continuance of the Custom among the Primitive Christians, is certainly a probable Reason that it is of moral Obligation, and was practised by our Lord himself."

A. Certainly he is mistaken. The learned *Basil Kennett*, in his *Antiquities*, giving an Account of the *Roman* Sacrifices, does inform us, that there were some standing Rules and Ceremonies that were observed in all Sacrifices².

The Priest (and sometimes the Person that gave the Victim) went before in a white Garment.

The Beast to be sacrificed was to be marked on the Horns with Gold, or crowned with Leaves.

Before the Procession went a publick Crier, giving them notice to attend the Solemnity.

The Sacrifice being brought to the Altar, the Priest ushered in the Solemnity with a Prayer.

After this Prayer the Priest began the Sacrifice with the throwing some sort of Corn and Frankincense, together with Meal mixed with Salt, upon the Head of the Beast.

In the next place, he sprinkled Wine between the Horns, but before he poured out the Wine

he just touched it with his Lips; this they termed *Libatio*.

Then he pluck'd off some Hairs from between the Horns of the Beast, and threw them into the Fire.

And then turning to the East he delivered it to be killed by an inferior Officer.

After this the *Aruspex* searched the Entrails for good or bad Omens.

And lastly, the Priests lay'd what Parts they thought fittest for the Gods upon the Altars, and regaled upon the rest.

Here then it is observable, that altho' the *Romans* did joyn Prayers with their Sacrifices, yet the Oblation of them was made, not by a Prayer of Oblation, but by several Acts of Oblation.

The very learned Bishop *Potter*, in his *Antiquities of Greece*^a, gives us a large and particular Account of the *Grecian* Sacrifices; and acquaints us, that after the Beast was brought to the Altar, the *Greeks*, before they sacrificed it, prayed to the God to accept their Oblations, and grant the Requests they then desired; but then their Priests offered their Victims by an Act of Oblation; for, as he tells us^b, *Dionysius the Halicarnassian*, comparing the *Grecian* and *Roman* Rites of Sacrifice, affirms, " That
 " having washed their Hands, and purified the
 " Victims with clear Water, and bestraw'd their
 " Heads with the Fruits of *Ceres*, they pray

^a Vol. i. B. 2. c. 4. p. 227, 228.

^b P. 230, 231.

“ to the Gods, and then command the Officers to
 “ kill the Victim; some of these do thereupon
 “ knock down the Victim, others cut it’s
 “ Throat when fall’n to the Ground, others
 “ flay off it’s Hide, divide the Body into it’s
 “ several Members, and cut off the first Fruits
 “ ———from every Entrail, and other Members,
 “ which being sprinkled with Barley-Meal, are
 “ presented upon Canisters to the Persons who
 “ offer the Sacrifice, by whom they are laid
 “ upon the Altar to be burnt; and whilst they
 “ are consuming in the Fire, Wine is poured
 “ upon them.”

Bishop *Potter* adds^c, whilst the Sacrifice was
 burning, the Priest, and the Person who gave
 the Victim, jointly made their Prayers to the
 God they worshipped; and sometimes the *Gre-*
cians sang Hymns composed in honour of their
 Gods.

Thus they join’d Prayers with their Sacri-
 fices; but the principal Rites of sacrificing were
 not Prayers, but Acts of Oblations.

When the great *Jehovah* instituted the Levi-
 tical Priesthood and Sacrifices, he appointed and
 specified the necessary Rites, the Act, or feve-
 ral Acts, of Sacrifice.

He appointed the Priests to lay their Hands
 upon every Sacrifice^d.

Sometimes he farther ordain’d that they should
 be presented before him, but no more^e.

Often he commanded that the whole Sacrifice

^c P. 231.

^d Lev. xvi. 21.

^e Ch. i. 7, 8, 9.

should be consumed by Fire upon the Altar; as when it was a whole Burnt-offering^f.

Frequently he order'd that the Blood should be sprinkled round about upon the Altar^g.

And sometimes he appointed that the Blood should only be wrung out at the sides of the Altar^h, and the like.

But there is no mention made of a Prayer of Oblation, either in the Old or New Testament. And now if these Observations be just and right, the Author of *The Necessity* triumph'd before a Victory. And we may rather concludeⁱ, that if the Custom of the greatest part of the World, and the consentient Practice, both of *Jews* and *Gentiles*, for several Ages; and what is more, of the divine Institutions concerning Sacrifices, be sufficient to give us a just Idea of the Nature, and inform us of the necessary Rites of Sacrifices, then we contend for the necessity of offering up our Christian Sacrifice, rather by an Act, than by a Prayer of Oblation,

When our blessed Saviour instituted the holy Eucharist, and commanded us, saying, *This do in remembrance of me*, I take it for granted, that he commanded us to offer up to God the Father the Memorial of his Passion, the pure Sacrifice of the New Testament, in commemoration of his own only propitiatory Sacrifice upon the Cross.

Now the Old Testament is the best Book in

^f Lev. vii. 1, 6.

^g *Ibid.* v. 2.

^h *Ibid.* Ch. i. 14, 15.

ⁱ *Necessity*, &c. p. 147.

the World to help us to understand the New. And if our Saviour's Injunction must be interpreted by the divine Institutions in the Law of *Moses*, relating to Sacrifices, we may conclude that our Saviour commanded our Christian Oblation to be made by an Act of Oblation.

And I believe that this was then the Practice of all the World, *Jews* and Heathens; and therefore it was natural for the Apostles of Christ, and all the first Christians, to understand it so.

And our blessed Redeemer did offer up himself a Sacrifice upon the Cross, by an Act, and not by a Prayer of Oblation; and therefore it cannot be improper to offer up our Christian Sacrifice by an Act of Oblation. St. *Justin Martyr* teaches^k, that *Christ Jesus* our Lord commanded us to offer the Bread of the Eucharist in commemoration of his Passion. Now if the Word *offer*, here must be understood according to the genuine Signification of the Word, or the Nature of a Sacrifice, or the then Practice of *Jews* and *Gentiles*, or the divine Institutions in the *Levitical* Law (and I think there is no sufficient reason to the contrary) then in St. *Justin's* Time they offered up to God the mystical Body and Blood of Christ by an Act of Oblation.

If *Origen* has respect to this Prayer, when he affirms^l, " We eat the Bread that has been " offered by Thanksgiving and Prayer;" then

^k Dial. Cum Tryph. p. 119.

^l Con. Cels. l. 8. p. 399.

this Custom began betwixt the Times wherein these two Fathers flourished.

The *Jews* and Heathens with their Sacrifices offered up their Prayers; and I think that the Testimonies produc'd by the Author of *The Necessity*, &c. prove no more^m. And as we offer up several Prayers vocally through *Jesus Christ* our Lord; so the first Christians frequently offered up their Prayers through *Christ Jesus* symbolically represented in the holy Eucharistⁿ, that their Prayers might be more prevailing, being presented to Heaven, whilst Christ, *who is the Propitiation for our Sins*^o, is represented upon the Altar as sacrificed for us.

But you say, that it was the practice of the ancient Church, to offer up their Sacrifices by Prayer and Thanksgiving.

A. But there was no necessity for it, nor can you produce any divine Institution, or the Example of Christ or his Apostles, to support your Practice.

And I think, that there is a great Impropriety in your Prayer of Oblation, when you say, "We offer——this Bread and this Cup;" and yet do not at the same time make an actual Oblation of them. And therefore in the Missal for the use of *Sarum*, compiled by the learned and renowned Bishop *Osmund*, who came into *England* with *William the Conqueror*^p, in the

^m The Necess. p. 146, 147.
p. 340.

^o 1 John ii. 2.

ⁿ Just. Mart. Dial. cum Tryph.

^p Mr. Collier's Ecclesiastical Hist. Vol. i. B. 4. Cent. 11. p. 277. Bishop *Godwin* in the Life of *Osmundus*.

Rubrick before the Oblatory Prayer, which precedes the Consecration, the Priest is ordered to elevate the Chalice with both Hands, offering the Sacrifice to the Lord, saying this Prayer.

Suscipe Sancta Trinitas hanc Oblationem.

And by the bye there is no Prayer of Invocation in this Missal.

As I take it, a proper material Sacrifice cannot be offered without an Act of Oblation; but it may without a Prayer of Oblation; such an Act then is the Principal, most necessary and most proper Act of Oblation.

And as your Prayer has no manner of Foundation in the Word of God, and is therefore to be rejected; so, when we present our Christian Sacrifice to the Throne of Grace, we, after the repetition of the Words of Institution, religiously and reverently, in a solemn and sacrificial manner, lay the consecrated Elements upon the Altar, and actually present them to God, by a proper, the chiefest and most necessary Rite of Sacrificing, which cannot justly be reprov'd.

Thirdly, You zealously contend for your Prayer of Invocation.

But of this Prayer, I say as you do of Transubstantiation, that it wants *Antiquity, Universality* and *Consent*, and more.

First, 'Tis so far from being grounded upon Scripture, and from being an Apostolical Tradition and Practice, that it is contrary to the

Example of our Saviour, his Apostles, and the Ante-Nicene Fathers.

Our Saviour sanctified the eucharistical Bread and Wine, by blessing and praising God over them; for *Ἐλογήσας*, St. Matt. xxvi. 26. does signify ascribing Blessing to God, as *Ἐχαριστήσας*, *ἡ*. 27. does giving Thanks to God; for these Texts must be understood in the same Sense, to make them consistent one with another; but we cannot render the former Word *Blessed*, and meaning blessed the Bread, because we cannot translate the latter Word *Thanked*, and say that our Saviour thanked the Cup; this being Nonsense.

Wherefore the Essentialists are mistaken, when they contend that *Christ Jesus* sanctified the Elements by praying to God to bless them, and not by ascribing blessing to God, as the Context, and other Places in Scripture require.

The Words of Institution then rightly interpreted, do manifest that the holy *Jesus* sanctified the sacramental Bread and Wine by a thanksgiving Prayer, contrary to the Prayer of Invocation; which is therefore to be rejected with Indignation, as being contrary to the divine Institution of the Lord's Supper.

The Essentialists contend, that giving of Thanks, *1 Cor. xiv. 16.* was a consecrating of the sacred Elements; and then, this is a scriptural Proof, that the Apostles consecrated the sacramental Bread and Wine, by a Form of Thanksgiving; which strongly argues that the Prayer of Invocation was no Apostolical Institution.

The Primitive Christians, no doubt, followed the Example and Command of the adorable *Jesus*, and his inspired Apostles; and St. *Justin Martyr*^r is express, “ Prayers being over, we
 “ salute each other with a Kiss; after this,
 “ Bread and a Cup of Water, and mixed Wine,
 “ are brought to the President, or Bishop,
 “ which he takes and offers up by Prayers to
 “ the Father of all things, through the Name of
 “ his Son and the holy Spirit; and this Thankf-
 “ giving to God, —— is a Prayer of more than
 “ ordinary length.” Here then is an evident
 Testimony, that in his Time, the sacred Ele-
 ments were consecrated by a Form of Thankf-
 giving.

And there is still extant in the Apostolical Constitutions, an ancient and very remarkable Prayer of Consecration, tho’ Mr. *Johnson* thinks otherwise of it^r.

The Prayer is conceived in these Words,
 “ We thank thee, O Father, for that Life
 “ which thou hast made known to us by *Jesus*
 “ thy Son, by whom thou madest all things,
 “ and takest care of the whole World; whom
 “ thou hast sent to become Man for our Salva-
 “ tion; whom thou hast permitted to suffer,
 “ and to die; whom thou hast raised up, and
 “ been pleased to glorify, and hast set him down
 “ at thy right Hand; by whom thou hast pro-
 “ mised us the Resurrection of the Dead; do
 “ thou, O Lord Almighty everlasting God, so ga-

^r Apol. i. §. 85. (Vid. his Unbloody Sacrifice, part i. p. 42.

“ ther together thy Church from the Ends of
 “ the Earth into thy Kingdom, as this [Corn]
 “ was once scattered, and is now become one
 “ Loaf? We also, our Father, thank thee for
 “ the precious Blood of *Jesus Christ*, which
 “ was shed for us, and for his precious Body,
 “ the Antitypes whereof we are now going to
 “ celebrate, as himself appointed us, to shew
 “ forth his Death.”

All which shews, that the Prayer of Invocation was no primitive practice.

2. This Prayer then wants Antiquity.

For the first expresse Evidence that is produced for this Prayer, is *St. Cyril*, Bishop of *Jerusalem*. Hence one may fairly presume that this Innovation crept into the Eastern Church soon after the Council of *Nice* was broken up.

3. This Tradition wants *Universality*, for this Prayer has not been receiv'd by all Churches; and *Consent*, for the Prayer of Invocation has been opposed, by very many learned Members of the *Latin Church*.

The Essentialists have publish'd a Piece, intitled, *A Defence of the Greek Church, against the Roman, in the Article of the Consecration*, by the learned *Dr. J. E. Grabe*.

Now if the Book answers the Inscription, it must needs cut their own Throat; for then there must have been a manifest Difference in this Particular between the two Churches; and then this Prayer having been opposed by the *Latin Church*, must remain destitute of the Supports of *Universality* and *Consent*; and in this very Book^c

Book^t the Opinion of the *Greek Church*, concerning this Article, is to this Day call'd by the *Latins*, "*a vile and abominable Error, nay an Heresy.*"

4. I am of opinion, that no one can make use of this Prayer without a vast deal of Assurance, and a piece of Presumption highly criminal; for this Prayer of Invocation contains an Explanation of the Mystery of the Sacrament. Now tho' I cannot say that the Bread and Wine are not made the Body and Blood of Christ, by the descent of the Holy Ghost upon them to make them so; yet I believe that no one ought thus to explain this Mystery without a divine Revelation to justify the same.

Wherefore this Prayer ought utterly to be rejected.

The fourth Point, which the Essentialists maintain, is that the eucharistical Wine, of necessity, ought to be diluted with Water.

To speak my Mind freely about this Particular; I declare that I should have been pleased had the Mixture been received by a competent Authority, for fear we should be wanting in that which was the ancient and general Practice of the Primitive Church; but then I would not have it to be receiv'd as necessary, for fear lest we should make that necessary which God has not made so; and every considerate Christian knows that there is no necessity for that. For my part, I conceive that no part of

the eucharistical Cup is essential, but what represents the Blood of Christ, and that is the Wine only; and that no part of it is necessary but what is essential.

Besides, the learned Vindicator says, " We believe the Mixture necessary, the Church of Rome does not so." Hence I infer, that altho' the Essentialists can produce *Antiquity* and *Universality* for the Practice, yet they want *Consent* to support the necessity of it; for it has not at all times been esteem'd necessary by the Faithful.

And now from the whole I think I may say, that the learned Dr. *Brett* was grievously mistaken, when he avers, " That the Traditions he pleads for have been received and practised in all Ages, in all Places, and by all the Faithful, down to the time of *John Calvin* and his Contemporaries." And that he has mistaken those that were not truly primitive, for apostolical Traditions; and that he has manifestly departed from his own Rule laid down at the beginning of his own Discourse; which is, " To take care that he never teach any thing which he would have the People hold and believe, but what is agreeable to the Doctrine of the Old and New Testament, and what the Catholick Fathers and ancient Bishops have collected from that very Doctrine."

This learned Divine says, " As what we

Part 1. p. 160.

w P. 102.

x P. 104.

y P. 119.

“ find in the Writings of the most primitive
 “ Fathers——is a good Evidence of the Faith
 “ and Practice which has been observed *in all*
 “ *Times*; so the Liturgies of the several
 “ Churches, are the best Evidencies that can be
 “ desired to prove the Universality of this
 “ Faith and Practice being the most undoubted
 “ Testimony of what has been observed *in all*
 “ *Places, and by all the Faithful.*”

Again, “ There cannot be better Authority
 “ to prove the Universality of any Practice in
 “ the Christian Worship, than the consent of
 “ all these Liturgies, as they are Testimonies
 “ of the unanimous consent of the whole Chri-
 “ stian World, in those Points wherein they all
 “ agree.”

A. These Liturgies (lately published) are spu-
 rious Pieces, miserably interpolated, and of
 themselves of no Authority.

“ But (says this Divine²) what the Fathers
 “ have testified to have been parts of the
 “ publick Service of the Church in all Ages
 “ what we find agreeable to those Testimonies
 “ in the Liturgies now extant, we may con-
 “ clude to have been always there; and what
 “ we find not agreeable to those Testimonies, that
 “ we may reasonably conclude to be an Addition
 “ or Interpolation made in After-Times.

A. This I take to be a very clear Proof of
 what I say; for if all those Passages are to be
 judged Interpolations in these Liturgies, which

cannot be confirm'd by the Testimonies of the most ancient Fathers ; then these Liturgies of themselves are of no Authority at all.

“ But, says the learned Dr. *Brett*, there can be no better Authority for the Universality of any Practice in the Christian Worship, than the unanimous Consent of all these Liturgies.”

A. It may be so with respect to those later Ages, wherein these Liturgies were used, but it is not so with respect to the most primitive Churches; for he cannot prove that these Liturgies were used in the first, second, or third Century.

But he says^a, “ *St. Paul* writing to *Timothy*, and in him to all Bishops, says, *O Timothy, keep that which is committed to thy trust*, 1 Tim. vi. 20. — the Form of sound Words which thou hast heard of me. — that good thing which was committed to thee, 2 Tim. i. 13, 14. — and we doubt not but the Form of sound Words, — contained as well a Form of divine Worship, as of the Articles of the Christian Faith ; and that both these were that good Thing which was committed to him (and with him to all Bishops) by the Holy Ghost, which he was therefore bound faithfully to keep, and to commit to faithful Men, who should be able to teach others also.” This *Depositum*, this good thing, could not be the holy Scriptures of the New Testa-

^a P. 77. 113, 115, 117, 118, 124, 125.

ment, for the Canon of the New Testament was not yet compleated, but a Creed or summary Form of the Articles of our Faith, and a Form also to be used in Administration of the Sacrament. “ For it is certain, from the Account we have of these things in the Acts of the Apostles, that the Churches were formed, and the Sacraments duly administred in them, before one Word of the New Testament was written. And it’s certain the Apostles had dispers’d themselves, and had planted Churches in all parts of the World, before all the Books of the New Testament were written,—— therefore the Form and manner of administering the Sacraments, and other Apostolical Practices, was a part of the *Depositum* of that good Thing which was committed to Timothy. —— And if the Churches, whose Liturgies I have mentioned,——had not every one of them received, and carefully preserved, the Form of sound Words delivered by the Apostles, it is impossible there could have been such an Harmony and perfect Agreement betwixt them, as I shall shew there is, &c.”

A. Here then I suppose that this learned Divine means (if he means any thing to his purpose) that the Thanksgiving Prayer, the repeating of the Words of Institution, the Oblatory Prayer, the Prayer of Invocation, and Prayers for the Dead, in the ancient Liturgies, were, at least, in Sense and Substance, part of that very *Depositum* which was committed by St. Paul

to *Timothy*. But I wonder that he should think that all this should be granted him, without any manner of Proof. I do not believe that this has been the Opinion of all the Faithful in all Ages and Churches. Our modern Commentators are of Opinion, that the *Form of sound Words*, which *Timothy* was commanded to hold fast, was a *Summary* of Christian Faith.

And Dr. *Whitby* avers^b, “ That all the Fathers, from *Irenæus* downwards, speak of such a Symbol of Faith, delivered to the Church by the Apostles and their Disciples, which the Church received from them, and distributed to her Sons. — And which for Substance was the same with the Apostles Creed.”

But I am of an Opinion, that neither the ancient nor modern Commentators, do, with one Consent, make the Points the Doctor contends for, a part of the *Depositum* committed to *Timothy*.

I am inclined to think, that this is a Fiction form'd in his own luxuriant Fancy, and what is not to be admitted without some good Proof, some ancient and substantial Testimonies. This would be much to his Purpose could he but make it out, but I am confident that he can never prove it. Nor is there such an Harmony as he asserts in these Liturgies, for the Prayer of Invocation is wanting in very many of them; which with me is a good Proof, that this Prayer

^b In 2 Tim. ii. 2.

was not taken from the *Form of sound Words*, or traditionary Liturgy delivered to the first Christian Church by the holy Apostles; for if the Western Church has receiv'd it from the Apostles, it would not have been expung'd out of, but have been found in, the ancient *Roman Missal*.

And it's observable how the Essentialists contend that the Prayer of Invocation does compleat the consecration of the sacred Elements; and Dr. *Brett* owns^c, that the blessed *Jesus* consecrated the Elements before he made an Oblation of those Symbols of his Body and Blood.

And I affirm, that the holy and tremendous Sacrifice of the primitive Church, was Bread and Wine, first consecrated into the mystical Body and Blood of Christ our Saviour.

In the Apostolical Constitutions it is affirmed^d,
 “ That instead of a bloody Sacrifice Christ ap-
 “ pointed the rational, unbloody, and mystical
 “ Sacrifice — of his Body and Blood.” And
 certainly the Bread and Wine are not his mystical Body and Blood, until the Consecration is compleated.

Irenæus declares^e, “ Christ's charging his Disciples to offer First Fruits to God of his own
 “ Creatures — took Bread — and gave Thanks,
 “ saying, this is my Body, and the Cup likewise
 “ — and declared it to be his Blood; and
 “ taught the new Oblation of the New Testa-

^c Dissert. p. 134.

^d Lib. 6. c. 23.

^e Lib. 4. c. 32.

ment, which the Church receiving from the Apostles offers to God throughout the whole World." This new Oblation then, must of necessity be the Sacramental Bread and Wine, first made the mystical Body and Blood of Christ, by a proper Consecration.

St. *Cyprian's* Question is^f, " And who, I pray, is more properly and truly a Priest of the most high God, than our Lord *Jesus Christ*? who offered up a Sacrifice to his Father, the very same which——*Melchisedeck* had offered before him, *i. e.* Bread and Wine, which were his own Body and Blood." But the Bread and Wine then were made by our Saviour his Body and Blood, before he offered them up to his Father.

Eusebius asks^g, " What other Person, save only our Saviour, hath taught his Followers to offer unbloody and rational Sacrifices, which are performed by Prayer and a mysterious naming of God? on which Account Altars have been erected throughout the whole World, and Churches consecrated, and divine ministrations of intellectual and rational Sacrifices, are offered up by all Nations to the only God, the supreme King."

Now by unbloody Sacrifices I believe it will be granted me, that he means the consecrated Bread and Wine in the holy Eucharist.

Ephraem Syrus (as Mr. *Johnson* informs us^h)

^f Ep. 63. Cantab.

^g Orat. de laud. Const. c. 16. p. 768. Edit.

^h Unbloody Sacrifice, pt. 1. p. 30.

says,

says, " The tremendous Mysteries full of Im-
" mortality are offered to God."

And St. *Austin* affirmsⁱ, " That instead of all
" the Sacrifices and Oblations of the Old
" Testament, Christ's Body is offered and com-
" municated to the Receivers."

Now I presume that all these Testimonies do
clearly and fully prove, that the Bread and
Wine in the Eucharist were compleatly conse-
crated before they were offered up to God the
Father, by the blessed *Jesus*, his holy Apostles,
or any of the *Ante-Nicene* Fathers.

But in the *Clementine* Liturgy, and in several
other Liturgies publish'd by the learned Dr. *Brett*,
the Oblatory Prayer is made use of before the
Prayer of Invocation, the Essentialists consecra-
ting Prayer; and our Author contends^k that it
ought to be so, and positively asserts, " That
" this is certainly the most natural Order."
Now I think that he is fearfully mistaken; and
do hence conclude, that these Prayers as now
recommended to us, can no way possibly be
any part of the *Depositum* which St. *Paul* com-
mitted to *Timothy*, and was by the Church
transmitted down to future Generations; be-
cause it is not easily to be believed, that an
Apostle should command any thing so repugnant
to the imitable Example of Christ; or that the
Church should so soon, and so universally re-
ject an Apostolical Injunction.

For my part I declare, that the Essentialists,

ⁱ Unbloody Sacrifice, p. 28.

^k Dissert. p. 127.

by following the inconsistent *Précédents* which they have found in some spurious Liturgies, have shamefully degraded the Christian Oblation, by making it to consist of Bread and Wine not completely consecrated.

And if they will not be persuaded to discharge their Prayer of Invocation, I would have them to be advised to place it before that of the Oblation, for the honour of the Christian Sacrifice, that most solemn and highest Act of divine Worship in the Church of Christ; especially since that would make their Service more conformable to the Example of the holy *Jesus*, and the Pattern and Tradition of the primitive Church. And in this respect the *Roman* Liturgy is more rational and consonant to the nature of the Christian Sacrifice.

Again, the Prayer of Invocation cannot possibly be any part of this *Depositum*, for this Prayer is repugnant to Scripture. Now, as we are not to receive any Interpretation of Scripture, which is contrary to an Apostolical and Universal Tradition of the Church¹; so neither are we to affirm any thing to be an Apostolical Institution which is contrary to Scripture; but the sacred Scriptures do evidently teach that the eucharistical Elements are to be sanctified by Acts of Thanksgiving; and that this Prayer does suppose that they are to be consecrated not by a Thanksgiving Prayer, but by praying for

¹ P. 101.

the Descent of the Holy Ghost upon them, to make them the Body and Blood of Christ.

I believe that the Sacrament is a Mystery, and will still continue to be so to the End of the World. And that the Eastern Church had no more Knowledge, nor Right nor Authority to explain it away, than the Western Church. And if the Doctrine of Transubstantiation implies more and greater Absurdities, the Prayer of Invocation argues as notorious and as high a piece of Presumption. And it's remarkable, that as the Papists, to defend their absurd Doctrine of Transubstantiation, do interpret the sacred Oracles into Contradiction, *St. Matth. xxvi. 26.* so the Essentialists, mislead by a vain and partial Tradition, and zealously contending for their Prayer of Invocation, do interpret the Holy Scriptures into Nonsense; for undertaking to prove this Point from Scripture, they translate *Εὐχαριστίας*. *St. Luke xxii. 19.* eucharistiz'd, i. e. in plain *English*, thank'd, which is downright Nonsense.

And truly, I think, that the Essentialists introducing, it may be with great reluctance^m, the Prayer of Invocation into their Communion-Service, was a Judgment from Heaven upon them, for their schismatical Conduct. The common Fate of all Schismaticks, who constantly entertain some such palpable Errors as plainly and evidently demonstrate, to all considerate Persons, that all such Separations are unjust and

^m Dr. Brett's Dissert. p. 158.

Defenceless, and ought by no means to be comply'd with.

Lastly, Nor can Prayers for the Dead be any part of that *Depositum*; for they were not made use of in the Christian Church, till after the Time in which *Justin Martyr* wrote.

If then there was such an Apostolical Method of administering the Sacrament, as you so eagerly contend for, it has not been so carefully transmitted down to us, as the Apostolical *Summary* of the Christian Faith. And if we are not obliged to believe any Article of the Apostles Creed, but what may be confirmed by one or more Texts of Scripture^a; much less are we obliged to receive as necessary, such parts of those Liturgies, which you have published, as have no very good Foundation in the written Word of God.

But, according to you^o, that the Scriptures are the only Rule of Faith and Worship, cannot be proved from Scripture, but by Tradition only. "If therefore (say you) our Adversaries think it reasonable that we should receive and adhere to this Tradition, — we think it also highly just that we should receive all other Traditions which are as well attested as this is. And if the Number or Antiquity of Testimonies be of weight, in Matters of Tradition, as undoubtedly it is, I dare engage to give more ancient and more numerous Testimonies before the Council of Nice,

^a P. 114.

^o P. 136, 137.

“ for the Practice of the Church in all those
 “ Points which the Author of *No Reasons*,
 “ &c. has thought fit to declare against, than
 “ he, or any one else, can bring for the Canon
 “ of the New Testament, or Number of Books
 “ of which it is compos’d. Now^p, if Tradition
 “ be a Rule to know what Books make
 “ up the Canon of the New Testament, and
 “ who were the Authors of those Books, as it
 “ most certainly is the only Rule, with regard
 “ to those Books whose Authors have not set
 “ their Names to the Books they wrote, Tra-
 “ dition is also a certain Rule to teach us what
 “ was the Practice of the Apostles in Matters
 “ of religious Worship. For these are Matters
 “ of Fact which can be prov’d only by Evi-
 “ dence, — and by no other Evidence than
 “ Tradition.” Again^q, “ May not Scripture
 “ be the chief and principal Rule, and Tradi-
 “ tion a subordinate Rule, to guide us where the
 “ Scripture is not full and express, and to ex-
 “ plain and interpret the Scripture where it
 “ not clear and obvious.”

A. Sir, it has been evidently prov’d from
 Tradition, by the consentient Testimony of
 ancient Fathers, that the Scriptures contain all
 things necessary to be believed or practis’d in
 order to Salvation; and being written by Inspi-
 ration, are therefore the one only sure and in-
 fallible Rule of Faith and Practice: Wherefore
 we cannot admit of your Tradition as a Rule

Faith and Practice, no not a subordinate Rule. Indeed it is an excellent means of explaining the sacred Oracles, and useful in a very high degree, against Papists, and all other Sectaries amongst us; but then, when Traditions have lead us into a right understanding of any Text of Scripture, we dismiss Tradition, and make the holy Scriptures rightly interpreted, and not Tradition, to be our Rule. And we are so far from despising Tradition truly primitive, or rejecting the Evidences produced from the most ancient Fathers, that we readily submit to, and highly value the consentient Testimonies of the *Ante-Nicene* Fathers; and yet we are not for paying the same deference to humane, late, and fallible, as to divine or truly apostolical Traditions; nor for multiplying Rules of Faith and Worship without any manner of necessity; nor making your Tradition a Rule, which as such, is of little or no use in Religion. But you think it a very high degree of Prejudice in us, to acknowledge such and such an Evidence sufficient in one Case, and not in another of the same kind.

But, methinks, Tradition, as a means of knowledge, may sufficiently answer one End, and yet not another of the same nature. Thus, it is by the Principles of right Reason only, that we can prove the Being and Existence of a God; but Reason only could never have discover'd a Trinity. A Tradition that is not Apostolical, will be a concluding Evidence for the Canon of the New Testament; but no Tradition, but no Testimony that you can produce, will prove the necessity

necessity of making Prayers for the Dead part of the eucharistical Service. The Tradition which you alledge, may be a sufficient Proof that the Mixture was an Apostolical Practice; but yet your Tradition will never prove your Prayer of Invocation a divine Institution.

But this learned Divine affirms, that he can produce more ancient, more full, and more numerous Testimonies, before the Council of *Nice*, for the Points so earnestly contended for by the Essentialists, than any one can bring for the Canon of the New Testament, or number of Books of which it is composed.

A. You here talk of more ancient, more full, and more numerous Testimonies; but yet, as positive as you are, and as important soever this may seem to be, whosoever depends upon these your confident Assertions, they will be deceived. And I cannot but observe, that when in your Dissertation^t, you purposely undertook the Work, you did not (and I believe could not) produce any one Testimony, from the *Ante-Nicene* Bishops, to support your novel Prayer of Invocation.

'Tis hard, Sir, that we must here be pressed with so terrible a Dilemma, that, since we admit of the Canon of the New Testament, we must either receive your presumptuous Prayer of Invocation, or labour under the Imputation of being unreasonable Men; but our Comfort is,

there is a great deal more of Flourish than of Argument, in what you here assert.

Now, if by Canon of the New Testament you mean, a general receiv'd Canon that contains exactly the same Books, and the same number of Books, as ours is compos'd of; then I will put a Case, which I presume will sufficiently shew how inconclusive your way of reasoning here is.

Thus, the Papists may say, that they can produce as many, as clear, and as ancient Testimonies, for the Invocation of Saints, and the worshipping of Images, before the sixth General-Council, *A. D.* 680, as you can for such a Canon. And therefore that you are unreasonable, if to your Prayer of Invocation you do not add, their invocation of Saints and worshipping of Images.

You may say that these Customs are contrary to Scripture.

And so much they may truly say of your Prayer of Invocation.

You do say¹, that these Practices want Antiquity.

They will quote your *St. Cyril of Jerusalem*, and some of your Liturgies, for the Invocation of Saints², and plead not only Apostolical Tradition, but quote *Gregory Nyssen*, and others of the Fourth and Fifth Centuries, for the worshipping of Images; and you can produce no ex-

¹ P. 69.

² Dr. B. Dissert. p. 302, 305, &c.

press Evidences for your Invocation amongst all the Fathers of the three first Centuries.

You add, that it was a considerable time before these bad Customs became universal Practices.

But they may say more, that your Prayer of Invocation did never yet become a general Practice.

Again, but if you mean that we cannot bring as ancient and as good Testimonies to prove the several Books of our New Testament to be Canonical Scripture, as you can for the ancient Usages which you plead for.

I answer, that as every Book of the New Testament, where it was first received and known, was immediately as sacred and canonical, as ever it was afterwards: So we can bring more ancient, more express, and more numerous Testimonies to prove any Book in our Canon to be canonical, genuine, and inspired Scripture, than you can produce before the *Nicene Council*, to prove that Tradition alone is a sure Rule of Faith and Practice, that Prayers for the Dead should be part of the eucharistical Service, that your oblatory Prayer is absolutely necessary, or to maintain the essentiality of the Mixture, or even the lawfulness of your Prayer of Invocation.

I shall instance only in the *Revelation*, because all the other Books of the New Testament seem to have been admitted into the Canon before it was received into it.

It is probable that *Clemens Romanus* his Epistles

Epistles were written before St. *John's* Works were made publick, and seems to be the reason why this Book was not quoted by him, who however cites several of the Books of the New Testament.

But St. *Justin Martyr* quotes the *Revelation*, and expressly calls the Author of it, *John* the Apostle of Christ^a.

St. *Irenæus* cites the *Revelation* seven or eight times^b, and gives the Writer of it the Title of *John* the Disciple of the Lord.

Clemens Alexandrinus quotes the *Revelation* expressly^c, and very often refers to it, as sacred Scripture^d.

Tertullian also quotes this divinely inspired Book, perhaps above sixty times in his Works.

Origen also quotes the *Revelation* of *John*^e, and refers to it^f.

St. *Cyprian* quotes the *Revelation* near three-score times; frequently he says, *Thus we read in the Book of the Revelations*; and he cites it as a divine Record, the Book wherein the Lord himself speaks to us, and the holy Scripture which is written for our instruction.

Thus with reference to the *Revelation* he says^g, "In the holy Scriptures by which our Lord would have us to be instructed and admonished."

"Elsewhere a Voice is heard from Heaven,

^a Dialog. cum Tryph. p. 248. Mr. *Jebb's* Edit.

^w Lib. 4.

^{28, 33, 37, 38.} Lib. 5. c. 21, 23.

^x Pædag. Lib. 2. p.

^{35.} ^y *Ibid.* Tom. 1. p. 241. & *alibi.*

^z Tract. in Mat.

^{p.} ^a Tract 35.

^b St. Cyp. Edit. Amst. de Hab. Virg. p.

^{p.} 71. Apoc. 17. 1.

“ forewarning what God’s People ought to do,
 “ and saying *come out of her, my People, &c.*^c

“ Again, as the Lord finds us at his Summons,
 “ so he will judge us, seeing that he testifieth
 “ and saith, *All the Churches shall know, &c.*^d

“ Once more, the divine Scripture in the
 “ *Revelation* doth declare, that Waters signify
 “ a Multitude of People^e.

Eusebius declares, “ That some reject the
 “ *Revelation* of St. *John*, but others allow of
 “ it, and admit it amongst those Books that are
 “ received as unquestionable and undoubted^f.

Now I think that you cannot bring so many
 good, and so ancient Evidences, especially, for
 your Prayer of Invocation.

And yet, if you could, this your Argument
 would not be conclusive.

’Tis extremely unreasonable to expect any
 other Proof for any Point, than the nature of
 the thing will admit of; and therefore, since the
 Canon of the New Testament was not fixed
 till after the Death of the last of the Apostles,
 we do not require scriptural Evidences for the
 same, but are readily determined by Tradition
 only. But then, on the other hand, it is high-
 ly reasonable and just, where better Proof is to
 be produced, that we do not rely upon Tra-
 dition only. Nay, in all the necessary Points
 of Faith and Practice, we ought not to depend
 upon traditionary Testimonies alone, but to
 search after scriptural Evidences; and for this

^c De Lap. p. 90. Apo. 18. 4.
^e Ep. 63. p. 280.

^d De Mortal. p. 114. Apo. 2.
^f Eccles. Hist. lib. 3. c. 25.

manifest and convincing Reason, because our good God has given us his written Word, that we should not, in such Cases, trust to fallible Tradition only.

The Case of the Canon, and the Points in dispute betwixt us, are not parallel; and therefore this your Argument is not only very arbitrary but sophistical; and it does not follow, because we are determined by Tradition only, in the Case of the Canon, that therefore we should receive all other Traditions which are as well attested, altho' they cannot be corroborated by scriptural Authority.

At the close of your Treatise, you solemnly declare, " That you desire always to follow this Rule of St. *Augustine's*, *Whatsoever the universal Church holdeth, and which was not instituted by any Council, but has been always observed, that we most rightly conclude to have been a Tradition derived from Apostolical Authority.*"

This is a fine Saying, and your Reader may be tempted to think that you have governed yourself, in your late Conduct, by this Maxim; but in truth you have, by plausible Pretences, and bigg Words, miserably deceived, imposed upon, and abused your credulous Followers; for you have actually introduced that into your new Communion Office, which the universal Church does not hold, which has not been always observed, and which cannot rightly be concluded to have been a Tradition derived

from Apostolical Authority. Thus, for example, your Prayer of Invocation, wants *Scripture, and Antiquity, and Universality, and Consent*, to support it.

This curiously contrived Sentence, of the ingenious and learned St. *Augustine*, has, I believe, been fatal to you, and that you have repeated it so often, that it has seduced you to depend too much upon fallible Tradition, and too little upon the infallible Word of God.

And this so much admired Rule will not conclude any of your main Points necessary. The *Quarto decimani*, for a considerable time, kept their *Easter* constantly upon the fourteenth Day of the Month, and for this they pleaded Apostolical Tradition, and the undoubted Practice of St. *John*^h; and yet, there being no scriptural Command for it, the Church has laid aside this Apostolical Custom, which shews, that barely Apostolical Usage, does not imply every such Practice to be a necessary and essential part of Christianityⁱ.

And altho' this was a good Rule in St. *Austin's* Days, yet it is not a convenient one now in this eighteenth Century. For suppose I should undertake to determine whether or no it is lawful for a Clergyman to receive Usury. In the Old Testament I find it forbidden the *Jews*^k; but it is not *Malum in se*, and our Saviour seems to look favourably upon the Practice^l. Now, if I should apply myself to this Rule for some Satisfaction in this Point, I could not pro-

^h Defence, p. 9, 10.
25. 35, 36, 37, 38.

ⁱ Reply to the Vind. p. 49.
^l St. Matt. xxv. 27.

^k Lev.

cure all the authentick Histories, all the established Canons and Constitutions, Liturgies, Homilies, Articles, and Catechisms, of all the Churches, in all the Parts of the Christian World, in this Century, and in all the preceding Ages of the Church; and if I could, I could not read them: And if I could read them, I could not find time to do it in. And if I could surmount all these Difficulties, I should, it may be, only consider whether or no it were forbidden Christians in the New Testament; and if I found that it was not there prohibited, I might, perhaps, with some Restrictions, conclude for the lawfulness of it, even against Councils and Fathers.

And now I fancy, that if *St. Austin* were now alive, he would not give us this for a Rule without some Limitations; and you are so sensible how tedious a thing it would be, to search all the authentick Monuments of Antiquity, that you have very much shortned our Labours, by fixing the Period of our Enquiries, and not making them to extend from the Times of the Apostles to all succeeding Ages.

But moreover, this Rule, is not a good Rule, to distinguish false Opinions from Orthodox Doctrines, unless that be a good Rule which excludes the sacred Scriptures from being part of it, which *Vincentius Lirinensis* did not do. It were better to rely only upon our Bibles, than upon this Maxim; certainly, the Prejudice that would make a Man mistake the Holy Scripture, would make him to mistake the ancient Fathers. The truth is, it is only a Part, and the less valuable Part of a good Rule.

Now

Now if *St. Austin* has this curious Aphorism in some part of his Works, a learned and orthodox Divine informs me, that he has in another part of his voluminous Writings, this most excellent Maxim, namely^m, “ If any one, I will
 “ not say, if we, who are in no wise to be compared to him, who said, *though we*; but as
 “ he added in the following Words; though an
 “ Angel from Heaven should preach to you,
 “ either concerning Christ, or his Church, or
 “ any other thing belonging to our Faith or
 “ Life, besides what ye have received in the legal and evangelical Scriptures, let him be
 “ Anathema.”

Now, if in giving us a Rule from *St. Augustine*, you had considered the necessity of this Maxime, in this Case, and join'd Scripture and Tradition together, you had but done justice to *St. Augustine*, the World, and the Cause of Religion. And how true soever this Maxime may be in itself, yet I am sorry that so great a Divine should set it up as a Rule independent on the infallible Scriptures.

And I wonder the more at this, because in his own Rule, laid down in the beginning of this Tractⁿ, Scripture and Tradition are joined together; and so they are in the Rule which the Church of *England* prescribes^o, and which he there makes his own; and concerning which he declares^p, that he shall, “ By Prayers to God,
 “ and Arguments with Men, endeavour to prevail with all Persons, of all Persuasions, to be

^m No sufficient Reasons, pt. 1. 17. S. Aug. con. Dan. Petil. lib. 3. c. 6. ⁿ P. 5, 11. ^o P. 2 ^p P. 10.

“ guided by that only infallible Rule of true
 “ Religion.” And they are united together in
 that Rule of *Vincentius Lirinensis*, which he
 sets so great a Value upon^q; who says, “ The
 “ way to continue perfectly sound in the right
 “ Faith, is, by God’s Grace, to secure it upon
 “ these two Foundations; first, upon the Au-
 “ thority of the Holy Scripture; and after that,
 “ upon the Tradition of the Catholick Church.”

This is an excellent Rule, but how many
 Authors, and of what Age, the latter part of
 this Rule must be supposed to comprehend,
 is what still wants to be adjusted concerning it.
 And I think that it should include only *Vincen-
 tius Lirinensis* his Piece, and the authentick
 Works of those Fathers who wrote before him;
 and this agrees very well with the Directions
 received by the Bishops, *A. D.* 1582^r; and
Vincentius Lirinensis flourished about the Year
 of our Lord 434.

But I have one thing more to say concerning
 this Rule of St. *Austin*’s, so often recommended,
 which is, that it is not a Rule of Faith and Prac-
 tice. And I think that I have clearly proved,
 that there is not any thing to be believed and
 practised as necessary to Salvation, that is taught
 us by Tradition only.

If you say this Maxim of St. *Austin*’s is true.

I answer, that the reason of it is, because
 nothing necessary to Salvation, has been univer-
 sally observed in the Catholick Church, but what
 has been delivered in the sacred Scriptures.

If you insist upon it, " That Tradition is a
 " certain Rule to teach us what was the Prac-
 " tice of the Apostles in Matters of religious
 " Worship,—and that these are Matters of Facts
 " which — can be now proved by no other
 " Evidence than Tradition.

A. All the necessary Parts of divine Worship
 are taught us in the written Word of God, and
 therefore can be proved by other Evidences
 than humane Testimonies.

CONCLUSION.

Sir, you have done a great deal of hurt to
 the Church of God by your late Conduct; and
 you are increasing your Guilt by defending the
 same. You have Parts and Learning enough to
 discover your Mistakes. I therefore earnestly
 begg of you seriously to consider whether you
 have not taken that for a Rule of Faith and
 Practice, which is only a Means of Knowledge;
 and whether you have not mistaken a modern
 Custom for an apostolical Tradition; and so de-
 ceived your own Heart. I shall only recom-
 mend to you the former part of the sixth Article
 of the Church of *England*; which runs thus,
 " Holy Scripture containeth all things necessary
 " to Salvation: So that whatsoever is not read
 " therein, nor may be proved thereby, is not
 " to be required of any Man, that it should
 " be believed as an Article of Faith, or be
 " thought requisite or necessary to Salvation.

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